WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PAPER 2 — ESSAY / COMPREHENSION

2015

SECTION A

Answer three questions in all: one question from Section A and all the questions in Sections B and C.

1. Write a letter to your friend in another school giving him/her three reasons why your school has been excelling in academic work.

2. Write an article suitable for publication in a national newspaper on the topic: **The importance of national sports festivals**.

3. The School Hero is an award meant for the student considered to have exhibited exemplary leadership qualities. As the Senior Prefect, write a letter to the head of your school, giving three reasons why your nominee should be given the award.

4. You are the main speaker in a debate on the topic: **Students in rural schools have more advantages than those in urban centres**. Write your argument for or against the motion.

5. Write a story ending with the statement: **We apologized to each other and reconciled**.

SECTION B

6. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

The mansion by the roadside in my village reminds me of a similar sight in the state capital, three decades ago. Standing conspicuously by the highway in the heart of the city, the mansion posed a bold challenge to road users. It belonged to Chief Koko who was regarded as untouchable in his community. Nobody dared step on his toes. Motorists had learnt to steer clear of it. It was generally assumed that moving close to it could cost one one's life.

Then came a governor who decided to widen all the major roads in the capital city. He stressed that this would involve the demolition of buildings that fell within twenty metres from the centre of the road. However, although the governor also stressed that compensations would be paid, Chief Koko was not impressed. He made it clear that nothing should tamper with his mansion, warning that whoever defied him risked dire consequences.

Not long after the governor's official proclamation, newspaper reporters had a field day speculating on the unprecedented confrontation with Chief. With time, news filtered out that he asserted that whoever dared him would certainly end up where others like them had gone. The message was clear — defiance meant death. So, reporters were pleading for a new route to circumvent the mansion. However, the governor made it clear that there would be no retreat.

Before long, work had started on the project. One of the first casualties was a post office that was just some metres within the specified distance. It was cut into two. Soon, the frontage of a school nearby also followed. But, it was assumed that things would be different with the mansion whose owner tolerated no effrontery. Day by day, the project moved closer to the mansion, with the heavy machine levelling one structure after another. Then, when it was clear that the mansion was next in line, the driver of the bulldozer requested to go on leave. This got to the governor who ordered the driver to first do his duty. He sent emissaries to the governor to spare his life since his children were still very young.

The following morning, people got a shocker! The governor himself showed up at the site and asked for the key to the bulldozer, ready to assume the driver's seat. The driver, surveying the possible consequences, tearfully climbed up and pleaded that the governor should please care for his children after his demise. The governor announced that if anything was to happen he, not the driver, would be the target.

So, the driver got to work and the mansion collapsed like a pack of cards. Press photographers went to town with their cameras, hoping to capture Chief Koko in action. But nothing unusual happened, and soon the whole structure became rubble.

The aftermath? Everybody thought either or both men would soon belong to the great beyond. But this much I know: that the governor is still around; and so is the driver.

Questions

a) What opinion did people have of Chief Koko?

b) What does the expression *unprecedented confrontation* tell us about the governor?

c) Why was it necessary to demolish buildings?

d) When the driver said that his children were still very young, what did he imply?

e) '… People got a shocker.' Why was the governor's action a shocker?

f) What did people expect Chief Koko to do after the demolition of his mansion?

g) 'Not long after the governor's official proclamation…'

i. What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?

ii. What is its function?

h) Quote a simile used in the sixth paragraph of the passage.

i) For each of the following words, find another word or phrase which means the same and can replace it as it is used in the passage:

i) assumed;

ii) retreat;

iii) specified;

iv) showed up;

v) collapsed.

SECTION C

7. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions on it.

Every normal human being would want to put his or her feet up once in a while and relax, but, obviously, one cannot relax all the time. A little work does not kill. Rather, it keeps one active and mentally alert.

Some people think that the invention of robots is the best thing that ever happened to man. They are convinced that the invention has saved the day because robots are ideal workers who work without complaining or getting tired. Robots never reveal company secrets for any reason — corruption, fame or blackmail.

The admirers of robots think that once a robot is programmed, it can do any piece of work with precision over a long period without slowing down, getting bored or even going on break or vacation. Robots can be made to perform any task. They do not grumble, protest or ask for 'inducement allowance', overtime, bonus or any of the motivations that human beings usually demand. They also work under conditions which human beings would not accept due to either incapability or attitude.

One good thing about robots is that any of its damaged parts can be replaced for work to go on effectively. On the other hand, if a human being loses a vital part of the body, that part may not be replaced for work to go on as effectively as before.

There is no doubt at all that the robot is useful but I strongly believe that the human being is more efficient than the robot in many ways. Human beings are sensitive, thinking beings who are flexible and can therefore control their actions. Thus, they can perform more functions than robots. Since human beings can think, discriminate and make value judgements, they can solve problems on the spur of the moment. The robot, on the other hand, cannot do this because what it has been programmed for is all that it is capable of doing. If a robot is wrongly programmed, it will continue to produce the wrong result until its programme is corrected.

The human being can take the initiative in many things. He can communicate or even call for assistance when need be, which the robot cannot do. The human being can be appealed to, to make some crucial changes; he can

also learn from observing what goes on and modify what he is doing.

It is clear that even though robots are useful, they are deficient in many ways, and therefore cannot have an advantage over human beings. In a crisis, the robot cannot face the challenge; neither reacts nor reflects.

The robot is designed and programmed by human beings. How then can the created be superior to the creator? Robots are created to assist human beings and relieve them of some of their burdens, not to take over completely from them.

Questions

a) In three sentences, one for each, state why the admirers of robots think that robots are more efficient than human beings.

b) In three sentences, one for each, state three advantages which the human being has over the robot.